

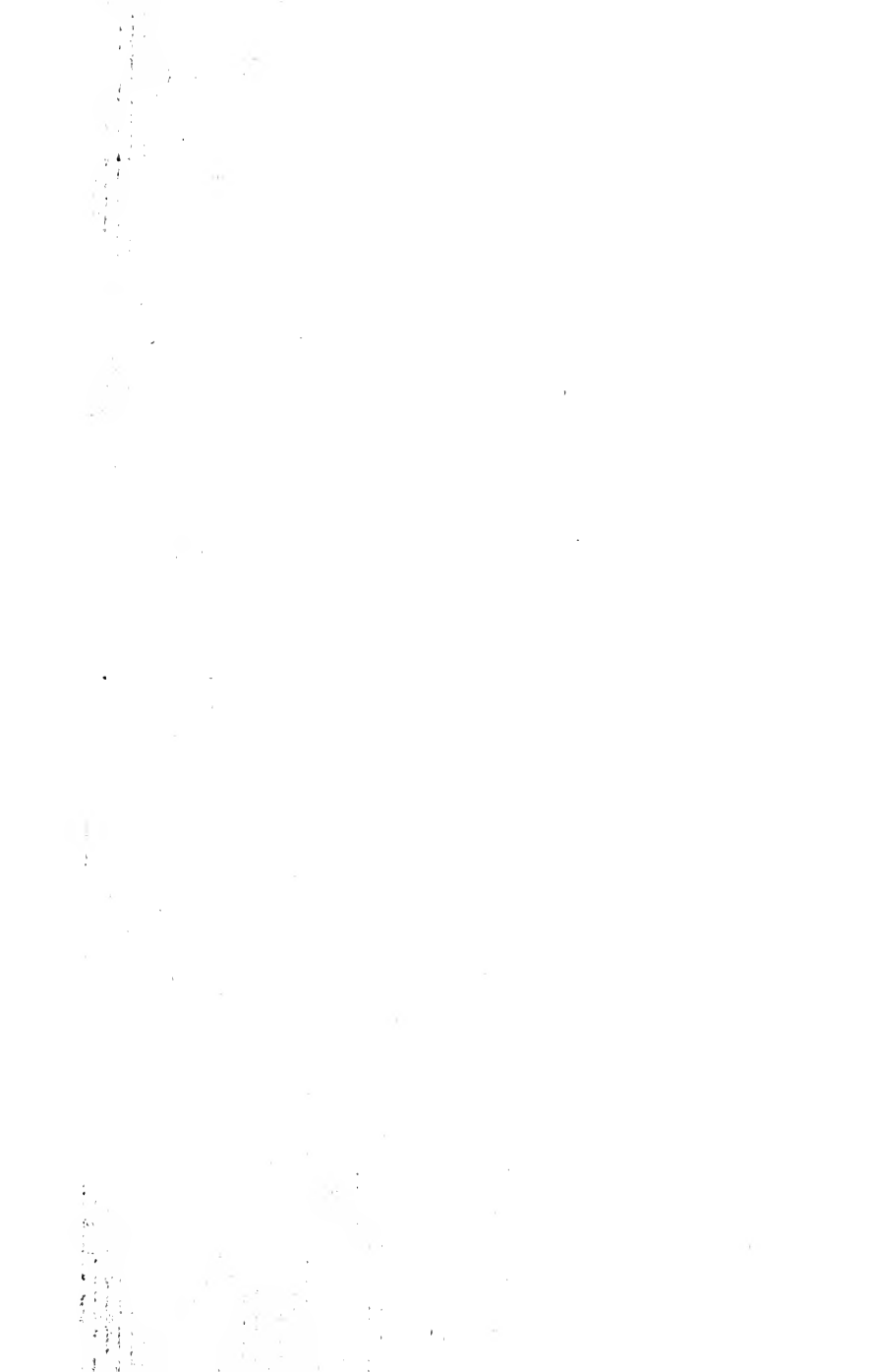
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# LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

BY

WILLIAM WARNER BISHOP

PREPRINT OF  
MANUAL OF LIBRARY ECONOMY  
CHAPTER II

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## A. L. A. MANUAL OF LIBRARY ECONOMY

Chap. I. "American Library History," by C. K. BOLTON.

II. "The Library of Congress," by W. W. BISHOP.

IV. "The College and University Library," by J. I. WYER, JR.

XVII. "Order and Accession Department," by F. F. HOPPER.

XXII. "Reference Department," by E. C. RICHARDSON.

XXVI. "Bookbinding," by A. L. BAILEY.

The above chapters are each printed in a separate pamphlet. Price 10 cents each.

Projected chapters now in preparation are as follows: "Loan Department"; "Branches and Other Distributing Agencies"; "Pamphlets, Clippings, Maps, Music"; "Book Selection"; "Classification"; "Commissions, State Aid and State Agencies"; "Work with the Blind"; "Library Service"; "State Libraries"; "Fixtures, Furniture, Fittings and Supplies"; "Free Public Libraries"; "Catalog"; "Shelf Department"; "Museums, Art Galleries, Lectures"; "Public Documents"; "Library Training"; "Special Libraries"; "Administration"; "Bibliography"; "Public Library and Public Schools"; "Library Work with Children"; "Legislation"; "Buildings."

## II LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

WILLIAM WARNER BISHOP  
Superintendent of the Reading Room

### HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

The Library of Congress was established by virtue of an Act of Congress, approved April 24, 1800, appropriating \$5,000 for the purchase of books and for fitting up a suitable apartment in the Capitol to contain them. In 1802 a Joint Committee of both Houses on the Library was created; under direction of this committee the Library continued for many years, but with the abandonment of joint committees the control passed more and more to the librarian. Since 1897 the direction of the Library has been entirely in his hands as a matter of law.

In 1814 the Library, then numbering slightly over 3,000 volumes, was destroyed when the Capitol was burned by the British troops. Very shortly thereafter the library of Thomas Jefferson, amounting to about 7,000 volumes, was purchased as a nucleus of a new collection. A catalog of this library, made by Jefferson himself, was published in 1815. The system of classification used by him was followed in the arrangement of the books and in various published catalogs until 1864. The annual increase was steady but small (about 1,300 volumes) until a second disastrous fire in 1851 left but 20,000 volumes out of the 55,000 to which the collection had grown. Appropriations were made at once to restore the Library's quarters in

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Johnston, Wm. Dawson. History of the Library of Congress, vol. I, 1800-1864. Washington, Gov. print. office, 1904.

U.S. Library of Congress. Report of the Librarian for 1901. Washington, Gov. print. office, 1901; pp. 183-97; cf. also the annual reports from 1897 to date.

the Capitol and to replace at least in part the books destroyed. In 1865 these quarters were much enlarged and in 1867 the purchase for \$100,000 of the Peter Force Collection of Americana of some 60,000 articles increased materially the size of the Library, which had reached nearly 100,000 volumes in the previous year. In 1867 also the Library of the Smithsonian Institution of some 40,000 volumes, consisting largely of transactions of learned societies, was deposited with the Library of Congress, which has continued to act as the custodian for the Smithsonian Institution.

From 1846 to 1859 the copyright law required one copy of a copyrighted book to be deposited in the Library. The same provision was in force from 1865 to 1870. The act of July 8, 1870, placed the registration of copyrights under the care of the Librarian of Congress, and required the deposit of two copies of each article copyrighted. This provision remains in force, under the act of March 4, 1909.

With the administration of Dr. A. R. Spofford, appointed Librarian in 1864, the Library entered on a period of rapid growth. In addition to the Force Collection many smaller collections were acquired, large numbers of newspapers were secured and bound, and the manuscripts greatly increased by the purchase of the Rochambeau and other papers. The operation of the copyright law and the agreement with the Smithsonian Institution permitted the somewhat meager appropriations for the increase of the Library to be used to great advantage in the auction market and in buying foreign books. When Dr. Spofford retired from the active direction of the Library in 1897 it had grown to about a million volumes and pamphlets. The crowding of this collection in the extremely inadequate space at the Capitol had long since shown the imperative need of a separate building for the Library.

As early as 1873 Congress began to consider the matter of new quarters. In 1886, after thirteen years of discussion, the



construction of a new building was authorized on the site immediately east of the Capitol. This building was completed in February, 1897, at a cost of \$6,347,000, on land costing \$585,000. The books were moved to the building in the following summer, with the exception of a portion of the Law Library which still remains at the Capitol.

Before the new building was occupied, Congress in the Appropriation Act of 1897 provided for the reorganization of the Library, created the office of Register of Copyrights, and increased the number of employees. Dr. Spofford, to whose unwearying zeal and enthusiasm the growth of the Library was largely due, became chief assistant librarian in 1897 on the appointment of John Russell Young as librarian. In 1899 Herbert Putnam was called from the Boston Library to the post made vacant by Mr. Young's death.

Since entering the new building<sup>1</sup> the Library has grown remarkably in size and in service rendered. It has become in fact, if not in name, the National Library. In 1910 its collections numbered: books, 1,793,158; maps and charts, 118,165; music, 517,806; prints, photographs, etc., 320,251. The number of persons employed (including those in the copyright office and those charged with the care of the building and grounds) is 484. It has come into active relations with the libraries of the country, and while rendering greatly increased service to Congress, has begun a career of service to the whole nation.

#### CONSTITUTION<sup>2</sup>

There is no single Act of Congress setting forth the constitution of the Library. Sections 80-100 of chap. 6 of the Revised Statutes of 1873 and the Appropriation Act of 1897 are the most

<sup>1</sup> For a description of the condition of the Library in 1900 cf. Putnam, H., *The Library of Congress*, *Atlantic monthly*, vol. 85, pp. 147-58. Cf. also Annual report of the librarian, 1901, pp. 292-351.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Annual report for 1901, pp. 208-91.

important laws relating to the institution. The Library is classed by law as a branch of the legislative department of the government, and although the librarian and the superintendent of the building and grounds are appointed by the President, they report directly to Congress. Appropriations for its support are made annually by Congress in the legislative, executive, and judicial appropriations bill. The librarian and the superintendent each submits to the Treasury estimates of his respective needs, and appears before the appropriations committee in support of his recommendations.

The total appropriation for 1911 was \$627,245, divided as follows:

Contingent expenses . . . . .	\$7,300.00
Increase of library	
Books . . . . .	\$100,000.00
Law books . . . . .	3,000.00
Periodicals . . . . .	5,000.00
	<hr/>
	108,000.00
Salaries . . . . .	454,445.00
Fuel, lights, furniture, etc. . . . .	57,500.00
	<hr/>
	\$627,245.00 <sup>1</sup>

The librarian handles no moneys, save those received from the sale of printed cards. All disbursements for salaries, contingent expenses, and purchases are made on his approval by the superintendent of the building and grounds, who is the disbursing officer of the Library.

The building is open from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. except on Sundays and most holidays, when it is open from 2:00 until 10:00 p.m. The main reading room and the periodical reading room are open during these hours, and the other reading rooms and offices from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

<sup>1</sup> This sum is exclusive of an appropriation of \$10,000 for the completion of the book stack in the southeast court, and an annual credit of \$202,000 at the Government Printing Office for printing and binding.

The Library is absolutely free to any reader over sixteen years old. The privilege of drawing books for home use is confined to senators and representatives, certain high officials of the government, judges, and other persons designated by statute. The librarian, in pursuance of his authority to make rules and regulations, occasionally grants this privilege to scholars engaged in research. The government bureaus in Washington draw books freely for official use, usually through their librarians.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the administration is the freest possible use of the books consistent with their safety, and the widest possible use consistent with the convenience of Congress. There is no limit to the number of books a reader may draw for reference use, and he has direct access to a reference collection of over 15,000 volumes in the main reading room. If his studies require that he have access to the shelves, this privilege is granted him, and if he needs to have the continuous use of the same books day after day, he is given a table where they may be reserved for him. When a typewriting machine will greatly facilitate a scholar's labors, a desk is provided in a room where readers will not be disturbed by its use. The Library has no force of copyists or photographers, but gives to those desiring to have extracts or facsimiles made the names and addresses of persons making a business of such work.

#### BUILDING

The plans for the building,<sup>2</sup> which was begun in 1886 and completed in 1897, were drawn by Messrs. Smithmeyer & Pelz, but the building was actually constructed and many architectural details worked out under General Thomas L. Casey, chief

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Annual report, 1907, pp. 70-78; *ibid.*, 1908, pp. 57-66.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Small, Herbert, Handbook of the Library of Congress, Boston, 1909; Green, B. R., The new building for the Library of Congress, Library journal, vol. 21, pp. 13-20; Green, B. R., The building

of engineers, U.S. army, and after his death by Bernard R. Green, the present superintendent. The exterior is of grey granite, and the interior is highly decorated with marbles, sculpture, and paintings. The building occupies three and one-half acres of land, contains 7,500,000 cubic feet of space, and over eight acres of floor space. The book stacks are of steel (Snead-Green shelving), and the whole construction is fireproof. About a thousand readers can be accommodated at one time in the various reading rooms and alcoves. Owing to the rapid growth of the collections a book stack has been constructed (1909) in the southeast courtyard. This is lighted wholly by electricity, and ventilated by forced draught.

#### COLLECTIONS

The main collections of the Library are supplemented and strengthened by those of the several separate departments, maps, music, prints, law, and manuscripts. The Library proper is strongest in bibliography, public documents (especially those of foreign governments), Americana, economics, political science, public law and legislation, genealogy, and newspapers. Through the Smithsonian Institution extensive files of transactions of foreign learned societies are received. By virtue of the copyright law it has received the most complete collection in existence of the products of the American press. American local

for the Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution, Annual report, 1897, pp. 625-33; Bain, G. G., The Congressional Library at Washington, Amer. architect and building news, vol. 48, pp. 95-97; Schuyler, M., The new Library of Congress, Scribner's magazine, vol. 21, pp. 709-27; Spofford, A. R., The nation's library: I, The new building; II, Special features of the Congressional Library, Century, vol. 31, pp. 682-94; Hempstead, E. A., The new Congressional Library, Chautauquan, vol. 23, pp. 695-705; Maury, N. B., The new Congressional Library, Cosmopolitan, vol. 23, pp. 10-20; The National Library, Munsey's mag., vol. 18, pp. 707-13; Coffin, W. A., The decorations in the new Congressional Library, Century, vol. 31, pp. 694-711.

history and biography are represented with unusual fulness. The Yudin Collection of some 80,000 volumes of Russian works, purchased in 1907, is particularly valuable for the history of Russia and Siberia. A collection of Japanese books (9,000 volumes) was bought in 1907, and in 1908 the Huitfeldt-Kaas collection of Scandinavian literature of about 5,000 volumes. Orientalia is further represented by the Weber library of Sanskrit literature (3,018 volumes, 1,002 pamphlets). The Library has bought recently large numbers of the monumenta of European history, and is rapidly growing in the sciences, pure and applied.

#### ADMINISTRATION (9 persons)

The administrative officers of the Library are the librarian, chief assistant librarian, chief clerk, and secretary. The superintendent of the building and grounds with his aids has entire charge of the maintenance of the building, and makes all disbursements for the Library.

The duties of the librarian, chief assistant librarian, and secretary are those customary in libraries, save that the librarian is not under the direction of a board of trustees. The functions of the chief clerk are those of administrative assistant. He is charged with the discipline of the force, and in his office are kept the records of the service and of the expenditures under the appropriations for the Library and the allotment for printing and binding.

#### THE DIVISIONS

The Library force is organized into "divisions," each with a chief and assistants; some of the divisions, including the Copyright Office, are further divided into sections.

*The Mail and Delivery Division* (5 persons) handles all materials arriving at or dispatched from the library building, including all mail matter and all books delivered for outside use. The yearly mail received exceeds 225,000 items, including

articles received for copyright, but not including newspapers and periodicals.

*The Order Division* (13 persons), organized in 1900, attends to all business connected with the purchase of books, and handles in the first instance all material destined for the increase of the Library proper, including gifts, deposits, exchanges, and transfers.

No accession books are kept, as the files of vouchers contain all the information generally recorded in formal accession records. Every item approved for purchase is entered on a card, and from these cards the orders, in the form of lists, are prepared for the dealer. The result is a card catalog of accessions. All bills are paid by check on the treasury of the United States after the most careful auditing and final approval by the librarian. A card-ledger system is kept which shows at any moment the condition of each appropriation, the outstanding orders, bills paid, and balances available.

*Printing Office and Bindery*.—These are branches of the Government Printing Office, which supplies the equipment and details the workmen. The work done is solely for the Library, and is charged to the "allotment" of the Library for binding and printing. The allotment for 1911 was \$202,000. The printing office prints the catalog cards, and all needed forms and circulars.<sup>1</sup> Five linotype machines are kept constantly busy at the card work.

The binding for the Library is mainly done in the building. A special *Binding Division* (3 persons) has charge of forwarding material in proper shape, keeping accounts with the bindery, etc.

*The Catalog Division* (91 persons) deals with printed books and pamphlets only, and includes the work of classification, shelf-listing, labeling, preparation of copy of catalog cards

<sup>1</sup> The publications of the Library in book form are printed at the Government Printing Office, not at the Library Branch.

for the printer, proofreading, and filing cards in the various catalogs.

The Catalog Division not only catalogs and classifies the current accessions (over 100,000 volumes annually), but has been engaged since 1899 in reclassifying and recataloging the entire collection. The greater part of the Library has now (1911) been reclassified, and new catalog entries have been made for over three-fourths of the entire collection. When this work was begun in 1899 there were approximately 700,000 volumes, exclusive of duplicates, to be handled. Moreover, the catalog being in the form of printed cards, a considerable force otherwise available for cataloging was necessarily devoted to proof-reading. Not only has the enormous task been almost completed in a decade, but its results from day to day in the cards printed have been made available to the libraries of the whole country, assisting them to an extraordinary degree in the preparation of their catalogs and relieving them of a very considerable expense.

The system of classification adopted has been devised from a comparison of existing schemes, and a consideration of the particular conditions in this Library. The schedules are still somewhat subject to change, and therefore no complete scheme has been printed. The outlines for most of the classes have been issued in pamphlet form.

The main catalog<sup>1</sup> of books and pamphlets is in the form of printed cards, arranged in the "dictionary" order, i.e., author, title, and subject entries in one alphabet. The rules followed are those of the American and British Library Associations. There are also special catalogs in book form for many of the special collections, as prints, maps, manuscripts, etc. These are noted under the various divisions.

<sup>1</sup> For the earlier catalogs in book form see Ford, Paul Leicester, A list of the Library of Congress catalogs, *Library journal*, vol. 15, pp. 326-27. Also, Annual report of the librarian, 1901, Appendix II, pp. 362-67.

*The Card-Distribution Section* (27 persons), established in 1901, handles the accumulated stock of printed catalog cards and their distribution and sale.<sup>1</sup>

The stock now (1911) numbers over 30,000,000 cards. These are stored by serial number in steel cases. Complete sets of one copy of each card published are on deposit in the principal library centers of the country, enabling inquirers in those places to ascertain whether a book is in the Library of Congress, and also facilitating greatly the ordering of printed cards. The cards are sold under the law governing the sale of public documents at the actual cost of manufacture plus 10 per cent—the maximum price being two cents per card, and one-half cent for each additional copy. In 1910 more than 1300 libraries and individuals purchased cards regularly.

*The Bibliography Division* (7 persons) deals with inquiries involving research too elaborate for the attendants in the reading room, or in form inconvenient for them to handle expeditiously; compiles lists of references on topics of current interest, particularly those pending in Congress. The division furnishes references in the case of numerous inquiries received by mail, and is also frequently called into service by members of Congress.

*Reading Rooms* (58 persons). The main reading room is in the center of the building. It has desks for 200 readers and sixty tables in the alcoves and galleries which are assigned to scholars making extended investigations. The issue desk is in the center. It is connected with the stacks, the Capitol, Smithsonian Division, and Librarian's Office by pneumatic tubes. Electric book carriers connect the desk with the north and south stacks, and with the Capitol. Books can ordinarily be delivered to readers in about five minutes after a request is handed in.

The alcoves surrounding the reading room contain a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. U.S. Library of Congress, *Handbook of Card Distribution*. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1909, and subsequent Bulletins.



reference collection of some 15,000 volumes, to which access is entirely free. The card catalogs of the Library are on the floor of the reading room.

In addition to the main reading room there are separate reading rooms for senators and representatives; a station is maintained at the Capitol for the receipt and delivery of books (an electric carrier runs through a tunnel over 1,200 feet long connecting the station with the Library—the passage takes three minutes). There are also in their respective divisions reading rooms for periodicals and newspapers, fine arts, maps, and music.

*Periodicals Division* (12 persons), organized in 1901, handles all periodicals as received, and prepares the completed volumes for binding. The total number of periodicals received is in excess of 13,000. Over 1,000 newspapers are currently received, including about 275 foreign newspapers; of these 375 are bound and shelved. Half the space in the new stack in the southeast court is fitted up with shelving designed especially for newspapers. The files of American newspapers are very extensive,<sup>1</sup> while the collection of newspapers of the eighteenth century is perhaps the largest in America.

The reading room for periodicals occupies the south side of the building on the main floor. It has seats for 250 readers, and 400 newspapers and 3,500 magazines are kept in this room.

*Documents Division* (5 persons), organized in 1901. The function of this division is to acquire, arrange, and make available for use the publications of governments, national, local, and municipal, and of quasi-public bodies, such as commercial organizations, international congresses, and the like. This division has charge of the exchange of publications of the federal government for those of other nations. The average annual receipt of these foreign documents is about 7,500 volumes and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. U.S. Library of Congress, Check-list of American newspapers, 1901. (New edition in preparation.)

pamphlets. The average annual accessions of all documents total over 40,000.

*The Division of Manuscripts* (4 persons), established 1897, has the custody of manuscript material not classified as maps, music, or prints. There is a special reading room for the consultation of manuscripts, in which is placed the card index to the collection. The collection consists almost wholly of the papers of American public men and of the federal government, and is by far the largest in America. It is constantly growing by gift and purchase. Calendars have been published of several of the groups of papers,<sup>1</sup> and the *Journal of the Continental Congress* is being published by the Library. The various departments of the government are authorized to turn over to the Library material of historical importance as it ceases to be needed in the departments. Much extremely valuable material has been received in pursuance of this law.

Manuscripts are repaired (frequently a task of great difficulty), mounted, and bound into volumes. The repairers and mounters handle about 8,500 pieces annually. Index cards are written for all important items in each manuscript.

Manuscripts are consulted by readers only under the supervision of attendants. The privilege of making extracts and photographs is granted on permit from the librarian.

*Division of Maps and Charts* (6 persons), organized in 1897. All maps, atlases, and many works on cartography are in the custody of this division (118,165 pieces, 1910). Maps are kept flat in steel cases, each map in a separate manila paper folder. The collection is richest in maps of North America,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Franklin papers (1905); John Paul Jones manuscripts (1903); Papers of James Monroe (1904); Naval records of the American Revolution (1906); Vernon-Wager manuscripts (1904); Washington aids (1906); Washington correspondence (1906); Washington manuscripts (1901).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. U.S. Library of Congress, *A list of maps of America in the Library of Congress . . .* by P. Lee Phillips. Washington, Gov. print. office, 1901.

and includes a number of manuscript maps. The collection of atlases is especially noteworthy,<sup>1</sup> comprising over 15,000 volumes, including most of the early printed atlases.

*The Division of Music*<sup>2</sup> (6 persons), organized 1897, has the custody of the collection of music (both scores and works of music), numbering over 517,000 items in 1910, with yearly accessions of more than 25,000. The greater part of the collection has been acquired by copyright, but of late extensive purchases have been made in addition. The Library now owns one of the largest and finest collections of music in the world, and by far the largest in America.<sup>3</sup>

*Division of Prints* (5 persons), organized in 1897. The collection of prints of all sorts and the books and periodicals devoted to the fine arts are in the charge of this division. In 1910 the collection numbered 320,251 pieces, including the Garrett collection of 19,113 and the Bradley collection of 1,980 engravings deposited with the Library. Card catalogs of all prints are made and filed in the division. A catalog of the Hubbard collection of prints was issued in 1905.

*Law Library* (6 persons); 138,059 volumes in 1910. Part of the Law Library (American and English common law, reports and legal periodicals) is kept at the Capitol, where it occupies rooms on the ground floor. In the library proper are placed works on foreign law, international law, and nearly complete duplicate sets of American reports, as well as a selection of treatises.

Under the direction of the law librarian acting under

<sup>1</sup> Cf. U.S. Library of Congress, A list of geographical atlases in the Library of Congress, compiled under the direction of P. Lee Phillips. 2 v. Washington, Gov. print. office, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> Sonneck, O. G. S. The Music Division of the Library of Congress in the proceedings of the Music Teachers' National Association, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Library of Congress, Dramatic music: catalogue of full scores. Compiled by O. G. S. Sonneck. Washington, Gov. print. office, 1908.

special authorization from Congress, an index to the Federal Statutes from 1873 to 1908 was compiled and published in 1908-11.<sup>1</sup>

*Copyright Office* (84 persons), organized in its present form in 1897. It has the entire "copyright business" in its charge. The office is under the register of copyrights, who "acts under the direction and supervision of the librarian of Congress." It receives and records all material offered for copyright entry, turning over to the Library such items as are desired. Fees received from owners of copyrights are turned into the U.S. Treasury. These amounted to \$104,644.95 in 1910, exceeding the appropriation for the office by \$15,685.00. The total number of articles deposited was 219,024 in 1910. The work of the office in acknowledging entries and sending certificates of copyright is kept strictly up to date. The office publishes in weekly and monthly issues a *Catalogue of Copyright Entries*, recording each item copyrighted, and forming the most complete record made of the product of the press of America.

*The Library of Congress and Other Libraries.*—The resources of the Library of Congress have been put at the disposal of other libraries, (1) by the sale and deposit of printed catalog cards; (2) inter-library loans; (3) distribution and sale of its publications, including bibliographies of special topics; (4) co-operation in publishing. The sale of printed cards has been mentioned above.<sup>2</sup> The inter-library loan is a matter of comparatively recent development. It acts on the principle that the duty of the National Library is to aid the unusual need with the unusual book. Books are lent to other libraries for

<sup>1</sup> An Index analysis of the Federal Statutes . . . by G. W. Scott and M. G. Beaman. Prepared under the direction of the Librarian of Congress. 2 vols. Washington, Gov. print. office, 1908-11. (*Not distributed by the Library, but sold only by the Superintendent of Documents.*)

<sup>2</sup> P. 10.

the use of investigators engaged in research expected to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge. The material lent cannot include, therefore, books that should be in a local library, or that can be borrowed from a library (such as a state library) having a particular duty to the community from which the application comes; nor books that are inexpensive and can easily be procured; nor books for the general reader, mere textbooks, or popular manuals; nor books where the purpose is ordinary student or thesis work, or for mere self-instruction. Nor can it include material which is in constant use at Washington, or whose loan would be an inconvenience to Congress, or to the executive departments of the government, or to reference readers in the Library of Congress.

Genealogies and local histories are not as a rule available for loan, nor are newspapers, the latter forming part of a consecutive historical record which the Library of Congress is expected to retain and preserve; and only for serious research can the privilege be extended to include volumes of periodicals.

The expense of transportation must be borne by the borrowing library.

*The Publications*<sup>1</sup> of the Library are distributed by exchange with other institutions, and by sale through the office of the Superintendent of Documents of the Government Printing Office. A very limited number is distributed gratis.

The Library has co-operated with the American Library Association in editing and publishing the "A. L. A. Catalog" of 1904 and the "A. L. A. Portrait Index," and with the libraries of the District of Columbia in the "Union List of Periodicals, Transactions, and Allied Publications," issued in 1901.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Library of Congress, Publications issued since 1897. January 1911.



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